

(e) The official record of a State committee decision on an appeal will be the decision letter that is issued following disposition of the appeal.

(f) Deliberations shall be in confidence except to the extent that a State committee may request the assistance of FSA employees during deliberations.

**§ 780.11 Appeals of NRCS determinations.**

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this part, a determination of NRCS issued to a participant pursuant to Title XII of the Food Security Act of 1985, as amended, including a wetland determination, may be appealed to the county committee in accordance with the procedures in this part.

(b) If the county committee hears the appeal and believes that the challenge to the NRCS determination is not frivolous, the county committee shall refer the case with its findings on other issues to the NRCS State Conservationist to review the determination, or may make such a referral in advance of resolving other issues.

(c) A decision of the county committee not to refer the case with its findings to the NRCS State Conservationist may be appealed to the State Committee.

(d) The county or State committee decision must incorporate, and be based upon, the results of the NRCS State Conservationist's review and subsequent determination.

**§ 780.12 Appeals of penalties assessed under the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act of 1978.**

(a) Requests for appeals of penalties assessed under the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act of 1978 must be addressed to: Administrator, Farm Service Agency, Stop 0572, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250-0572.

(b) Decisions in appeals under this section are not subject to reconsideration and are administratively final.

**§ 780.13 Verbatim transcripts.**

(a) Appellants and their representatives are precluded from making any electronic recording of any portion of a hearing or other proceeding conducted

in accordance with this part. Appellants interested in obtaining an official recording of a hearing or other proceeding may request a verbatim transcript in accordance with paragraph (b) of this section.

(b) Any party to an appeal or request for reconsideration under this part may request that a verbatim transcript be made of the hearing proceedings and that such transcript be made the official record of the hearing. The party requesting a verbatim transcript shall pay for the transcription service, provide a copy of the transcript to FSA free of charge, and allow any other party in the proceeding desiring to purchase a copy of the transcript to order it from the transcription service.

**§ 780.14 [Reserved]**

**§ 780.15 Time limitations.**

(a) To the extent practicable, no later than 10 business days after an agency decision maker renders an adverse decision that affects a participant, FSA will provide the participant written notice of the adverse decision and available appeal rights.

(b) A participant requesting an appealability review by the State Executive Director of an agency decision made at the county, area, district or State level that is otherwise determined by FSA not to be appealable must submit a written request for an appealability review to the State Executive Director that is received no later than 30 calendar days from the date a participant receives written notice of the decision.

(c) A participant requesting reconsideration, mediation or appeal must submit a written request as instructed in the notice of decision that is received no later than 30 calendar days from the date a participant receives written notice of the decision.

(d) Notwithstanding the time limits in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section, a request for an appealability review, reconsideration, or appeal may be accepted if, in the judgment of the reviewing authority with whom such request is filed, exceptional circumstances warrant such action. A participant does not have the right to see an exception under this paragraph.

## Farm Service Agency, USDA

## § 781.2

FSA's refusal to accept an untimely request is not appealable.

(e) Decisions appealable under this part are final unless review options available under this part or part 11 are timely exercised.

(1) Whenever the final date for any requirement of this part falls on a Saturday, Sunday, Federal holiday, or other day on which the pertinent FSA office is not open for the transaction of business during normal working hours, the time for submission of a request will be extended to the close of business on the next working day.

(2) The date when an adverse decision or other notice pursuant to these rules is deemed received is the earlier of physical delivery by hand, by facsimile with electronic confirmation of receipt, actual stamped record of receipt on a transmitted document, or 7 calendar days following deposit for delivery by regular mail.

### § 780.16 Implementation of final agency decisions.

To the extent practicable, no later than 30 calendar days after an agency decision becomes a final administrative decision of USDA, FSA will implement the decision.

### § 780.17 Judicial review.

(a) Decisions of the Administrator in appeals under this part from Agriculture Foreign Investment Disclosure Act penalties are administratively final decisions of USDA.

(b) The decision of a State Executive Director or State Conservationist on equitable relief made under § 718.307 of this title is administratively final and also not subject to judicial review.

## PART 781—DISCLOSURE OF FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN AGRICULTURAL LAND

Sec.

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AUTHORITY: Sec. 1-10, 92 Stat. 1266 (7 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*).

SOURCE: 49 FR 35074, Sept. 6, 1984, unless otherwise noted.

### § 781.1 General.

The purpose of these regulations is to set forth the requirements designed to implement the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act of 1978. The regulations require that a foreign person who acquires, disposes of, or holds an interest in United States agricultural land shall disclose such transactions and holdings to the Secretary of Agriculture. In particular, the regulations establish a system for the collection of information by the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (FSA) pertaining to foreign investment in United States agricultural land. The information collected will be utilized in the preparation of periodic reports to Congress and the President by the Economic Research Service (ERS) concerning the effect of such holdings upon family farms and rural communities.

### § 781.2 Definitions.

In determining the meaning of the provisions of this part, unless the context indicates otherwise, words importing the singular include and apply to several persons or things, words importing the plural include the singular, and words used in the present tense include the future as well as the present. The following terms shall have the following meanings:

(a) *AFIDA*. AFIDA means the Agricultural Foreign Investment Disclosure Act of 1978.

(b) *Agricultural land*. Agricultural land means land in the United States used for forestry production and land in the United States currently used for, or, if currently idle, land last used within the past five years, for farming, ranching, or timber production, except land not exceeding ten acres in the aggregate, if the annual gross receipts from the sale of the farm, ranch, or timber products produced thereon do not exceed \$1,000. Farming, ranching, or timber production includes, but is not limited to, activities set forth in the Standard Industrial Classification Manual (1987), Division A, exclusive of industry numbers 0711-0783, 0851, and 0912-0919 which cover animal trapping,